
BILL ORLEANS



CANDIDATE BIOGRAPHIES BY THE GREENBELT NEWS REVIEW

Bill Orleans is a jerk, and indeed a candidate for council. He has never been more of a jerk than when he agreed to be determined sufficiently compliant to be certified. Orleans was born in Greenbelt in October 1947 and lived most of his life here.

At about age 8 or so, while walking the sidewalk in front of the apartments on Crescent across from Center School, he casually was bouncing a rubber baseball when he saw a single ant crossing ahead one pace, which ant was then killed by a thoughtless bounce, something akin to sport. Orleans had no right to end its life for sport. All God's creatures got value.

At 15, after one year at High Point, Orleans moved to Albany to live with his father; his life lessons continued. Enrolled in Albany High and still a new kid, he had occasion to defend a mentally disabled kid who was harassed in a classroom, class in progress.

After a fist fight with the perpetrators, the harassment stopped. At 17, Orleans enlisted in the Marine Corps, and was discharged in January 1969. He then confronted first-hand the segregation in this country. In the summer of 1968, he was driving in the South and was confronted by colored and white only signs, Wallace (and Nixon) for President signs and KKK imagery alongside the roads. The last weekend before the election and seeing a Humphrey-Muskie sign above a Democratic Party office, on impulse he put a Humphrey-Muskie bumper sticker on his car. Sometimes incremental change only one step forward is better than two steps backward. He left Greenbelt again in the spring of '69 for New York, where he worked a variety of jobs until getting his license to drive a taxi, work which he engaged in on and off for 30 years.

Later he was received into the one true secular faith, democracy.

Over a strike barrel in '71 "Orleans," a friend said, "Never pat yourself on the back, ever ask of yourself more and harder questions, and, Orleans, never give in to the bastards."
